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The War as a  
Suggestion of Manifest Destiny.

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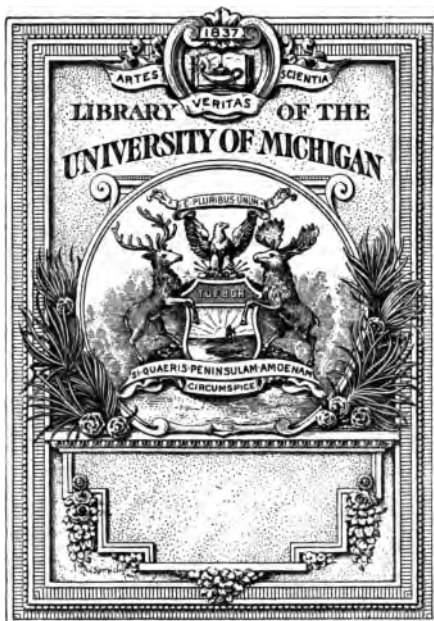
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## The War as a Suggestion of Manifest Destiny.

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The past few months have witnessed one of the most remarkable developments of public opinion ever observed in this or any other country. A year ago we wanted no colonies, no alliances, no European neighbors, no army and not much navy. Our relations with foreign nations were to be of the simplest. Our rôle in the old world was to be *nil*, and in the rest of the new world that of the dog in the manger. The Monroe Doctrine was construed as requiring no constructive action on our part and no positive obligations toward the civilized world. The Washington Doctrine was frankly interpreted to mean national isolation. Our position on these points might be questionable, but it was not equivocal. We at least knew our own minds.

To-day every one of these principles is challenged, if not definitely rejected. Proposals to enter into alliance with Great Britain, to annex Porto Rico and the Philippines, and to assume responsibilities for Cuba which may lead to annexation are seriously discussed and entertained with surprising favor. Plans for enlarging our navy far beyond anything previously contemplated and which can have no

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possible influence upon the decision of the present struggle, are considered favorably and greeted with general acclaim. Most striking of all, perhaps, is the way in which we have forgotten what we set out to accomplish and have become engrossed in new interests. Starving *reconcentrados* and struggling Cubans are crowded quite into the background of our imagination to make room for our own larger prospects and new ambitions.

Is this change an accident, or is it the inevitable consequence of our undertaking? If the latter, we certainly have had a most naïve unconsciousness of what war involves. We started to free a weak and oppressed people whose sufferings near our borders attracted our attention and appealed to our sympathies. We expected when this was done to go about our business as though nothing had happened. We thought nothing of Porto Rico or the Philippines, nothing of England or France, nothing of Germany and her craving for colonies and coaling stations. Least of all did we anticipate that the war would react upon our own thought and feeling in a way to modify our conscious national ideals. The rapidity with which these great questions have been forced upon the national mind has been bewildering, and our instinctive response must be regarded as highly significant of national character.

It is too early as I write to predict the result of the war except in the most general terms. It seems pretty plain, however, that Spain will lose all or most of her colonies and that the United States will get one or more of them as a permanent possession. The acquisition of Porto Rico seems quite inevitable and meets with little opposition. The acquisition of the Philippines will be a far more difficult and questionable proceeding, but on the other hand it will probably be less difficult than any other disposition we could make of them. Hard as it will be to keep them, it looks as if it would be still harder to satisfactorily give them away. Cuba will have a chance to be free if she has it in her to be

so, but failing that, we can neither leave her in anarchy nor resign her to any other power. With the prospect of invasion by American capital and American population her acquisition is as good as assured. We seem likely within a twelvemonth to have changed our ideal of isolation for that of empire and to have gone a long way toward its realization. If it be true that nature makes no leaps, knows no abrupt transitions, how are we to account for so startling a transformation?

The explanation, as in all such cases, is to be found in forces that have been slowly accumulating and have waited for the proper combination of circumstances to reveal their existence and their power. We have not suddenly changed our ideals; we have been slowly developing them for a century and have suddenly discovered their application to a new situation. The war is a revelation rather than a revolution. A careful examination of the course of events will convince us that this war is not accidental or capricious, scarcely even voluntary, but that it is the natural outcome of forces constantly at work in the race and exceptionally characteristic of the American people. I am inclined to believe that we have not yet become conscious of the true nature and scope of these forces and that they have other surprises in store for us. In attempting a partial analysis of the present situation I wish it clearly understood that I am making no plea for anything. A scientist *as such* has no right to be sorry or glad of anything. His business is to observe phenomena and to study cause and effect. I do not flatter myself that I am uninfluenced by my sympathies which are quite definite, but I am doing my best to be so. If any one finds in these pages either warning or congratulation he must read it between the lines.

Washington's advice so often quoted was not an expression of the American temper, but a warning against it. If he found it necessary to urge a people, weak and scattered and poor, protected by nature from attack and endowed



with boundless resources to occupy their energy, to avoid entanglements with more powerful nations when they had but just won a costly independence, it was because he believed them possessed of a redundant vitality which made them fundamentally and irrepressibly aggressive. To believe that he expected to modify this character, to make the people conservative and contented, would be a poor compliment to his sagacity. But he pointed to the West rather than the East as the direction in which this surplus energy could safely spend itself. That we have so far followed the advice was indeed almost inevitable. Our opportunities were so great, our earlier isolation so complete, our home problems so absorbing that even our ambition was temporarily satisfied. Our conservatism and content has been much like that of the boy whose appetite is temporarily satisfied while he is masticating a very large mouthful.

It is interesting to note the successive mouthfuls we have taken. In 1803 we could hardly be said to be in need of land, but by the purchase of Louisiana in that year we virtually doubled our national domain, and Florida was acquired soon after. These purchases, it may be said, furthered our national isolation by removing the possibility of disputes with those powers with whom we had been warned not to entangle ourselves. This may be made to seem, therefore, a conservative move. This was a plausible pretext and something of a real reason. But suppose Louisiana had belonged to the Aztecs, what would have been its fate? The next step in our territorial expansion relieves us of the necessity of speculating on this point. Hardly a generation passed before we annexed another empire, this time with no purpose of self-defence, disguising our ambitious commercial schemes under pretexts that are now forgotten. It was denounced as an unrighteous aggression, and according to the ethical code that governs individual relations and which for lack of a better term we hesitatingly apply to

national affairs, it was so. Whether this standard is adequate or not may best be determined by looking at the results.

We are told that America stands at the parting of the ways; that we have a compact and isolated territory, a conservative tradition and a homogeneous people and that a misstep now will cost us all these advantages. The fact is that we have stood at the parting of the ways again and again; that the same alternatives have always been before us and that we have never hesitated to decide as we seem to be deciding now. We never have had so unified a territory or so homogeneous a people as at the beginning of this century. Yet even then the differences between Massachusetts and South Carolina in all that influences the development of civilization were greater than have ever existed in any European state. We had the single advantage of a common language and the preponderance of a common stock. This unity was sacrificed by the purchase of Louisiana, but differences of language, religion and race character which might well have seemed ominous and have never disappeared, did not deter from the annexation. The territory indeed was adjacent and seems now to be naturally united, but to a people who felt it difficult to hold on to the territories beyond the Cumberland Gap this natural unity may well have been less evident. For all that they did not hesitate.

The annexation of the Pacific coast was a far more radical departure. The people were thoroughly alien in speech and character. The territory was separated from ours by barriers more insurmountable than that which separates us from Europe. With all our efforts to unite these two sections it still takes as long to go from New York to San Francisco as to Liverpool, and the expense of communication and transportation is and must remain far greater. And these two regions are not united by a continuous population, but separated by an eternal desert. The only unity

we acquired by this acquisition was a unity of color on the map between the two blue oceans.

This diversity is of course giving way to a larger unity. Unity of language is coming by education, unity of race by assimilation, or as regards the Spanish blood at least, by extermination, a process which, by the way, nature has not yet discarded. I am not criticising our past action or the reverse. I only note that we have never yet been deterred by these considerations, and it is not strange if they fail to deter us now.

Before inquiring more definitely what the present complication is likely to bring us to, we must look briefly at another side of our national development. While we have been growing large we have been growing rich, not by plunder, as did Spain in the sixteenth century, but by a production of wealth that has no precedent in history. Stimulated by extraordinary opportunities, we have developed a business temper which is impossible in a nation which is chiefly interested in guarding its frontiers. Although the reproach is continually heard, especially in France, that we are worshipers of the almighty dollar and that "the smoke of our factories darkens the sun of European civilization," I am convinced that neither we nor our critics understand how different is the economic temper of America from that of Continental Europe. Energy and foresight, audacity of conception and skill to organize great forces and execute great plans, these have become national characteristics and inevitably, also, national ideals. How instinctively American respect for shrewdness and enterprise condones gigantic frauds which give evidence of these qualities. It is not that we despise honesty—that is proved by our treatment of horse thieves and burglars—but we admire ability, which is a distinction of our nation and the cause of our success. We may not properly estimate the social value of honesty and enterprise, the static and dynamic factors in social life, but that is another question.

It follows from the same experience that we have scant respect for the more static property rights based on tradition and inheritance. The validity of such rights we concede, but we do not affirm it as we do that of ownership based on production. Our fortunes are not heirlooms, but personal achievements; our territory was not inherited but appropriated. We have dispossessed a people whose right to the soil was indisputable according to traditional canons, but a right which it would have been ridiculous and impossible to recognize. A people thus educated by contact with intensely dynamic conditions must have its own ethics of ownership, an ethics derived from its own experience and one that justifies its own existence. Despite all concessions the conviction will assert itself that the world belongs to the efficient, a conviction that finds countenance in the fact that it has been nature's working program for the last few million years. ✓

During the last fifty years we have made but one eight million dollar purchase, and this addition has not been important. We have come to regard our boundaries as fixed and to talk of our conservative tradition. The annexation of Hawaii has even been opposed as a violation of that tradition. How deeply we are impressed with our traditional conservatism we are beginning to see. The expansion of our territory and our population could not go farther until our surplus energy had accumulated in sufficient amount to overcome the far greater obstacles which we have next to meet. The ocean was a natural resting place in our advance. But that does not mean that it is a stopping place. It may become so if we meet resistance here which we can not overcome. Perhaps, indeed, we ought to anticipate this opposition and shun these dangers by a wise self-restraint. For they are many and serious, such as we have not met before. Any territories we are now likely to annex are not only separated from us by salt water, but they have a more alien population than any we

have hitherto incorporated and which for climatic reasons we are not likely soon to displace. Above all, this next step will bring us into contact with the great powers and make us a party to their titanic struggle. The prospect is one which may well make us pause.

But will it? What has happened in our century's experience to make us conservative or to lessen our ambitions or our confidence? When we struggled out of the grasp of Europe, a weak and scattered nation, with every consideration of prudence to keep us as far away from Europe as possible, we still were scarce restrained from meddling in her affairs. But a nation of seventy-five millions can not feel like one of three millions, nor a rich nation like one that is poor. Numbers and wealth may lead to arrogance and over-confidence, but that they are a just ground of confidence none will deny. [As a prosperous people we may not accurately measure our power, but there is small reason to believe that we shall underestimate it or be timid in our assertion of it.] The process by which our population has been selected has been from the first strongly partial to the spirit of restlessness and adventure. Unless I quite mistake the facts, our national experience has not been of a kind to develop within us either the fears or the scruples required to restrain that spirit from a farther aggression which may seem to further our interests to gratify our ambition. Doubtless we shall use our available sagacity in determining manner and time and place, and there will certainly be occasion enough for its exercise, but our purpose will not change. [We want the earth,—not consciously as a formulated program, but instinctively, with a desire that is too deep for consciousness, too constant and too regular ever to be questioned or thought of.]

When this national temper is thus regarded in its simplest form it is at once seen to be no peculiarity of ourselves. What nation does not want the earth? There are plenty of nations that have no aspirations to world dominion simply

because they have not the slightest hope of attaining it, and nations, like children, get over crying for the moon. Conscious desire must always be limited to the seemingly possible, but potential desire is not. We desire the next things and after those, again the next things, and so on. This may be a truism, but its consequences are not.

This universal desire is only the higher psychic phase of a still more fundamental and universal fact, the fact of growth. I need not attempt to establish here the well-known biological principle that growth is a necessary consequence of life and without it life cannot possibly persist. The rule has no exceptions, but its application to the higher social aggregates is expressed in general aphorisms which weakly impress the imagination. But it is absolutely and unqualifiedly true. There is not a people living which would not, if pressure were removed, populate the earth. There is not a nation in existence which under like conditions would not acquire universal dominion. And each would do so because it could not do otherwise, because it has no sufficient knowledge or voluntary control of its own vital forces to prevent their working out their natural result.

Here, as everywhere, growth means conflict sooner or later. The growing aggregates eventually touch, then crowd, and the strong displace the weak. The incidents of the struggle change, its essence never. Treaties of peace may rule out slugging, but they never stop the struggle. All means are used, all advantages count. By subtle encroachments or violent shock strength displaces weakness without itself knowing why. It may be long before the widening boundaries touch, before the pressure becomes uncomfortable enough to become conscious, but the time comes. And then despite all accidents and all precautions, the higher vitality triumphs. It may be a sad fact, but there is no means known by which weakness and inefficiency can inherit the earth. This may or may not be

✓ congenial to our moral sense. I have no comment to make on the ethics of evolution.

It is worth while for us occasionally to approach the consideration of national affairs with a consciousness of these great principles which we all accept, but of which in practical connections we make surprisingly little use. If these things are true the ideal of national isolation is a Utopia. It may still as a wholesome delusion render us valuable service, but no such consideration can give it standing as a ground for forecasting the future. It may be that our growth will not be political, that the struggle will be bloodless, but if so it will be because we find that other means are more efficient, not because they are more merciful. The people that sacrifices one jot of efficiency does so at the peril of its existence, and its ill-considered mercy perishes with it. Only the mercy that translates itself into efficiency will or can survive. Into this world struggle the American people is crowded by an inner power of growth which has no equal or precedent. The cry that we should keep out of the conflict is utterly fatuous. Long as it has taken us to grow up against the old world on either side, we have been crowding against it for years. Uneasiness, discomfort and alarm are passing over into that instinctive hostility which always announces the sense of danger and failure in a losing struggle. Americans have expressed a childlike wonder that France, with her republican government, should have manifested such sympathy for Spain in the present struggle. The nations of the Continent care nothing for Spain and would not shed a tear at her funeral, but everybody who knows them knows that though they court our tourists and envy our enterprise, they hate us, hate us as they have hated the English for a century, and for precisely the same reason. We are selfish and grasping. Shades of Napoleon and Bismarck! How doth the pot call the kettle black! No, the trouble is not that we want the earth, but that we are getting it, and we must pay the penalty of our success. ✓



They have diagnosed the present symptoms far better than we. They know that whether our alleged philanthropy is sincere or not it would have made no war had it not been backed by a consciousness of power nothing loath to express itself and a disposition to declare traditional rights invalidated by disuse. In a conflict involving such principles they cannot but feel concerned. ✓

How far can we anticipate the course and the outcome of this irrepressible conflict? A few things are clear.

The world is roughly divided into two parts distinguished by different capacities for development. They are usually known as civilized and uncivilized, but such a classification is justly offensive to the sensibilities of nations like those of South America which must unquestionably fall into the less favored class. The difference is rather one of independence, the weaker nations being unable to exist as such save by the sufferance or the disagreements of the more powerful ones. The first result of the great struggle must necessarily be the subjection of the dependent to the independent world. ✓ The most of this is already accomplished. In the old world everything is appropriated except China, whose fate is apparently soon to be determined. ✓ South America and Mexico are still nominally independent, but it is incredible that they should remain so. ✓ The Monroe Doctrine is an incipient protectorate which must become more definite and positive if it is to prevent their subjection to other powers. It is the belief of intelligent Germans everywhere that their government confidently expects to secure in South America not only an outlet for the overflowing German population, but an extension of the German state. That purpose will find its pretext in the inability of these governments to maintain order and guarantee security, and American sagacity will forestall it by increasing its influence over them and its responsibility for their action. ✓ It is probable that a generation more will see the entire world under the jurisdiction or within the "sphere of



influence" of half a dozen powers who will continue the struggle for race supremacy with increasing definiteness and determination.

These powers again fall into groups, the Romance, the Germanic, and the Slavic, united by kinship and likely to be consolidated by similarity of circumstance.

The Romance peoples are emotional and imaginative, the proud possessors of a culture that has ripened into the æsthetic stage. But they are self-centred and self-complacent, with little aptitude for those pursuits which are the source of modern progress and power. Their slackened advance has everywhere changed to a halt or passed into avowed retreat. The status of Spain will not be questioned. Despite the rapacity of her officials and the persistence of her beggars, Spanish appreciation of wealth has never begotten a genius for its creation. The nation is primarily influenced by the spectacular side of life. In a moment of supreme crisis she devotes to the prosecution of the war the proceeds of a patriotic bull-fight. A Berlin paper prints the following apropos of the sinking of the "Merrimac" in Santiago harbor:

"Both capitals are celebrating the defeat of the enemy ; New York in Yankee fashion, by a confident stock exchange ; Madrid in southern emotional style, by shouting and enthusiastic jubilation."

The contrast is significant of far-reaching differences of character. There is much that is attractive in the light and gay temperament, with its incapacity for seriousness, but with characteristic ruthlessness nature sacrifices the picturesqueness to the practical in civilization.

If Italy is better off than Spain it is because she is farther away from her former greatness and has no remnants of empire to lose. Her position, too, has brought her under the tutelage of more virile nations and given her some infusion of their vigor. But those who know Italy intimately will doubt if she is better off. Caught by the

glamor of the Triple Alliance, she has readily sacrificed the substance of power for its appearance. Within a generation, without having met a serious emergency or acquired a substantial advantage, she has increased her debt from \$625,000,000 to \$2,500,000,000. A hundred thousand of her people are said to go mad from hunger every year. And all for what? For that same intangible "national honor," that instinct of stage decorum which infallibly betrays a spectacular people, a people that can not distinguish between shadows and facts.

Despite all contradictions, the same is also true of France. She is a dwindling power because she is an emotional and appearance-loving power. Said a shrewd critic of European politics in reference to a certain complication: "It will be said that France has no interests here. True, but she has susceptibilities." It is the same story. It needs no prophet to foretell the end of the man or nation whose susceptibilities are not the servants of his interests. But prophecy is already passing into fulfillment. Her people, alone among the great nations of Europe, neither emigrate nor multiply at home. Her industry is timid and unprogressive. Her merchant marine has declined in two years 14 per cent in the number of ships and 28 per cent in tonnage, while that of foreign nations entering her ports, already vastly superior to her own, has increased 18 and 117 per cent respectively. It helps the matter but little that in 1898 she was at work upon ninety-one warships with a tonnage almost equal to that of her entire merchant marine. Her colonial empire, a monument to her susceptibilities, burdens rather than enriches her, despite her monopoly of its markets. Her desperate attack upon the Jews becomes intelligible when we are told that a people constituting one five-hundredth of her population owns one-fourth of her active capital, and an anti-Semite leader openly defends the attack on the ground that Frenchmen cannot compete with Jews. Even the physique of the race as

revealed by the careful annual measurements of her recruits is said to be slightly but continually deteriorating. I only quote the opinion of competent and sympathetic critics when I say that the Romance civilization, the ripest product of human development, is slowly but surely losing ground, and that no human power can arrest its dissolution. ✓

In the Germanic group there is much of crudity, more than we are willing to confess, but there is virility, energy and growth. There is much that needs changing, but there is much power of change. I need not particularize on a point which is incontestable and of which we are sufficiently conscious. These nations are gaining as certainly as the others are losing. The surplus of their population is establishing itself in every unoccupied part of the habitable globe. ✓ In this group is to be found the only nation which owes the world nothing and the world is said to owe her thirty thousand millions of dollars. If there is any doubt, too, as to where industrial leadership has its headquarters it is at least somewhere in this group. ✓ Of the Slavic group we can say little because as yet there is little to say. The Slavs are an unknown quantity, but capable apparently of prodigious but slow expansion. As yet they have not demonstrated their capacity to meet the Germanic peoples on the basis of industrial competition where the question of supremacy must eventually be decided, but they may be able to do so.

Within two centuries, perhaps in one, the Romance peoples will be in vassalage, and Germany, without a foot of foreign territory on which white men can thrive, will have been reduced to insignificance by the increase of peoples who have room in which to grow. Slav and Saxon, it narrows down to these, each of them with room for five hundred millions. Which will rule the world? The Slav is as yet far below the Saxon in industrial efficiency, in everything that can make for success in the struggle, unless it be in his willingness to devote all his energies to national

aggrandizement. His territory is compact and unified, but one in which development must be slow and which is ill-adapted to the production of a varied civilization. The Saxon has an ideal territory for the development of a world civilization, but one having little natural unity. Are the *psychic* bonds, the consciousness of kinship and the intellectual perception of interest strong enough to hold the race together? If so, its supremacy is assured by the nature and distribution of its territory, the character of its people and their enormous start in economic and intellectual development. If not, their fate, too, is vassalage, and America is not exempt.

The present crisis derives its chief significance, therefore, from its bearing on the problem of race cohesion, a bearing which is far greater than is ordinarily understood. The outburst of sympathy which has suddenly thrown England and America into each other's arms is in itself of small account. What will be the drift of our national interest in the near future?

It may be safely assumed that the irrepressible expansion of American energy and enterprise will continue for a long time to come. But for obvious reasons it cannot continue to assume the form of territorial extension. We have tackled about the only nation in the world from which we can obtain territory in the Eastern hemisphere. Whether we annex the Philippines or not we shall do very little more annexing, for the world is substantially appropriated. Our expansion must be a commercial expansion, and as a late comer we must trade by sufferance in other people's preserves. The whole expanding energy of our national life will assert itself in a demand for the two conditions necessary to its farther growth, access and order. Political and military control of the dependent part of the world will more and more be subordinated to these ends which alone can justify them to the exacting arbiter of life.

If we turn again to the three groups of powers with whom

we have to do we find the sharpest line drawn between them in regard to this point, which is of supreme importance to us. The Romance nations, with a consciousness of their economic weakness, deny the world free access to their possessions. Their colonies languish under their inaptitude and are largely lost to the world with no corresponding gain to them. In the weaker members of the group there is not even the capacity to maintain order, the most fundamental condition of economic prosperity.

For different reasons the third group adopts a similar policy. Its economic weakness may be that of undevelopment rather than that of decadence, but for the present the result is the same. It will be apparent, too, that this condition must long continue. Political, geographical, physical and ethnic conditions all point to a slow development. Indeed if the Anglo-Saxon does not exhaust his own inner capacity for growth, it is difficult to see how the Slav is ever to catch up with him. And so long as he is industrially the weaker he will not welcome equal competition. To stake everything on an unqualified industrial struggle will not be good strategy. He will instinctively resort to those grosser weapons to which a highly organized industrial state becomes increasingly sensitive, and which tend to perpetuate that lower culture with which they are more compatible.

In broad contrast with these policies stands that of the Anglo-Saxon world. To this group of nations alone belongs the honor of having mastered the problem of industrial order. There is order in Russia, but it is not industrial. It is repressive and negative, one that substitutes deterrent certainties for deterrent risks. Ordered liberty is an Anglo-Saxon achievement. If England gets rich out of her colonies it is because she makes them rich enough to be good customers. Subordinating all else to her industrial interests, her expansion has been everywhere constructive, creative, a triumph of cosmos over chaos. Were this her only

service to the world it would interest all those whose vitality makes them heirs of the future in the maintenance of her policy.

But this is not all. She alone among these nations has adopted the policy of the open door. This is a proof, not of her generosity but of her power. She welcomes all because she fears none. Perhaps this will not always continue. There is reason to apprehend that if American development seriously outstrips that of important parts of the British Empire the instinct of self-protection will conspire with the need of internal unification to close the British Empire against the new rival. But until this happens every blow at this order-creating power is a blow at the most vital American interests. And if the door should be closed those same interests will demand that we be on the inside. The Anglo-Saxon world is worth more than all the rest. The pressure of interest, but slightly felt as yet, but now rapidly increasing, is wholly unequivocal. Those who imagine that the American people will find their chief amusement in the future in "twisting the lion's tail" must have a poor opinion of their business sagacity.

I have said nothing of sentiment as affecting this relation, because it is a characteristic of these peoples and the secret of their success that they subordinate sentiment to interest. But when sentiment coincides with interest it is a force not to be despised. The unity of race, which is closer than that of any other people, is reinforced by unity of religion, language, social and political ideals. The burst of patriotic enthusiasm which followed the Venezuelan proclamation was met at the very outset by a revolt of our deeper sympathies as unmistakable as it was unprecedented, while England's moderation in dealing with what she regarded as an unwarrantable and outrageous interference has not been without effect on the most incorrigible American chauvinists. The spontaneous outburst of sympathy in the present crisis is as widespread and sincere as was ever

witnessed between two independent states. The profound feeling that the two nations are joint guardians of a common civilization will not be without influence in uniting them against the advance of the Russian Macedon.

It may be said, and with truth, that these dangers are too remote to be urgent questions in present politics. I will not insist here upon the fact that the race that first shapes its action with reference to the great issue will occupy a position of advantage, or dwell upon the admitted fact that Russia is already so doing. I am not sounding the tocsin, but analyzing actual forces. My point is that considerations like these are already impressing the American imagination and are destined to do so increasingly. While race consciousness is disintegrating polyglot empires like Austria-Hungary it is uniting the Anglo-Saxon peoples. The nation that can give hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of lives in what it believes to be a humane effort to free an insignificant and inferior people, will not stand unmoved and see the one people to which it is bound by ties of interest and speech and kinship, of religious and political and social ideals, menaced by an alien race.

That the ideal of national isolation is a Utopia is due to no accident of mood or circumstance, but to laws as fundamental as the constitution of protoplasm. We may deprecate the petty politics, the short-sighted sentiment and the unbridled passions which carried us with indecorous haste into a war whose costs we had not counted and whose results we could not foresee. But whence have come this pettiness and indecorum, these bickerings and feuds, this lawlessness and irresponsibility which are the repellent characteristics of American political and private life? From this same isolation and immunity from danger and responsibility. It is a fundamental law of social evolution that pressure from without is necessary to the unification and organization of societies. It was that that united Germany; it was that that first united us. With our growing power

there has come a dangerous weakening of this sobering sense of danger and outside responsibility. The centrifugal forces have become dangerously strong, and pent-up energies riot in an alarming fermentation. Already a trifling diversion of attention from inner interests that divide us to outer interests that unite us has obliterated old antipathies between North and South and moderated the jealousies between East and West. We are justly distrustful of our present ability to govern dependencies with wisdom and to conduct with discretion the subtle diplomacy which the newer relations require, but how about our potential ability? If there are no resources in our character we have no future, either of growth or maintenance, for in the end the two are synonymous. If we have those resources the coming of new responsibilities will mean the development of character.

The annexation of the Spanish colonies will bring us serious embarrassments and may not be wise. I venture to suggest, however, that its wisdom will not be determined by the simple question of present convenience, but by its reaction upon our national character and our preparation for the serious responsibilities which are in store for us. These I apprehend to consist primarily in an ever stronger and more constructive influence over American affairs, and more generally in increasingly intimate co-operation with Great Britain in the extension of the higher industrial and social order over the world. No nation or combination of nations ever before had the power to do this, but it looks as if the Anglo-Saxon race by concerted action might accomplish it.

It is possible that the proposed annexations would contribute to both these ends. The West Indies are a natural stepping-stone to South America, not simply as a base for improbable military operations, but as a meeting place of the two civilizations which cannot remain distinct. We can not refuse to let England order and organize South



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